



# Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture

Issue: 08-03 Released: February 8, 2008

## HIGHLIGHTS

Cattle and Calves Inventory  
Grazing Fee Rates  
Sheep and Goat Inventory and  
2007 Wool Production  
Ag Prices Received  
Farms and Land in Farms  
Number of Livestock Operations  
Egg Production

### January 1, 2008 Cattle and Calf Inventory

Montana's January 1, 2008 inventory of cattle and calves was 2.60 million head, up 8 percent from the 2007 inventory. The inventory of beef cows that had calved on January 1, 2008 was up 10 percent from a year ago to 1.52 million head. The number of milk cows was down 6 percent from a year ago to 17,000 head.

Beef heifer replacements weighing 500 pounds or more were unchanged from 2007 at 440,000 head. Milk heifer replacements increased 2,000 head from last year to 12,000 head. The number of other heifers weighing 500 lbs or more decreased 1 percent from last year to 178,000 head.

The inventory of steers weighing 500 pounds or more was unchanged from 2007 at 240,000 head. The inventory of calves weighing less than 500 pounds, at 80,000 head, was double last year's figure. Inventory of bulls weighing 500 pounds or more was up 22 percent to 110,000 head.

The number of cattle and calves on full feed that will be sent directly to slaughter, at 40,000 head, was down 27 percent from a year ago. There were 1.6 million calves born during 2007, up 10 percent from the previous year.

All cattle and calves in the United States as of January 1, 2008, totaled 96.7 million head, slightly below the 97.0 million on January 1, 2007.

All cows and heifers that have calved, at 41.8 million, were down 1 percent from the 42.0 million on January 1, 2007. Beef cows, at 32.6 million, were down 1 percent from January 1, 2007. Milk cows, at 9.22 million, were up 1 percent from January 1, 2007.

Other class estimates on January 1, 2008, and the change from January 1, 2007, are as follows:

- o All heifers 500 pounds and over, 20.0 million, down slightly.

- o Beef replacement heifers, 5.67 million, down 4 percent.
- o Milk replacement heifers, 4.46 million, up 3 percent.
- o Other heifers, 9.88 million, down slightly.
- o Steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 17.3 million, up slightly.
- o Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.21 million, down slightly.
- o Calves under 500 pounds, 15.4 million, down 1 percent.
- o Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter in all feedlots, 14.3 million, up slightly.
- o The combined total of calves under 500 pounds, and other heifers and steers over 500 pounds outside of feedlots was 28.2 million, down slightly.

The 2007 calf crop was estimated at 37.4 million head, down slightly from 2006. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 27.2 million, down 1 percent from 2006.

### 2007 Grazing Fee Rates

Grazing fees paid by Montana producers for grazing livestock on privately owned, non-irrigated grazing land were higher for all methods in 2007. The average fee paid for grazing livestock on an AUM (animal unit month) basis was \$17.80 per month, up \$1.60 from last year. Cattle producers paid \$20.10 per cow-calf pair in 2007, up \$1.40 from the previous year. Grazing fee rates charged on a per head rate were \$19.20 per month, up \$0.90 from last year.

In the 17 states that estimate grazing fees in the United States, the fee received for an AUM basis was \$14.50 per month in 2007, up \$0.70 from the previous year. The cow-calf rate was \$16.90 per month, up \$1.10 and the per head rate, at \$14.80 per month, was up \$0.40 from 2006.

All grazing fees are for privately-owned, non-irrigated grazing land. Rates charged for public land, irrigated land, and harvested cropland were excluded. The AUM rate includes reported AUM rates plus reported cow-calf rates that were converted to an AUM basis. The cow-calf rate was converted to AUM basis using the following formula ( $AUM = \text{cow-calf} \times 0.833$ ).

### January 1, 2008 Sheep and Goat Inventory and 2007 Wool Production

Montana's sheep and lamb inventory was 290,000 head on January 1, 2008, unchanged from last year.

Breeding sheep and lamb numbers were unchanged from 2007 at 265,000 head. The category breakouts were also unchanged and are as follows: Ewes one year and older, 209,000 head, rams one year and older, 7,000 head, replacement lambs, 49,000 head, and the 2007 lamb crop was 270,000 head.

All market sheep and lambs on hand January 1, 2008 totaled 25,000 head, unchanged from 2007. Of that total, 3,000 head were sheep, down from 6,000 head last year, and 22,000 head were lambs, up from 19,000 in 2007. The market lambs by weight category are as follows: 5 percent weighed less than 65 pounds, 18 percent weighed 65-84 pounds, 54 percent were in the 85-105 pound category, and 23 percent were over 105 pounds.

Montana wool growers produced 2.4 million pounds of wool during 2007, unchanged from 2006. The 2007 price per pound of wool increased \$0.39 to \$1.30 per pound. The total value of all wool produced in 2007 increased 43 percent to \$3.1 million. The total number of head shorn was unchanged from 2006 at 255,000 head. The average fleece weight was unchanged from 2006 at 9.2 pounds in 2007.

Montana's milk goat inventory in 2008 decreased 9 percent from last year to 2,000 head, and meat and other goat inventory decreased 8 percent to 11,000 head on January 1, 2008. All other categories were not published but were included with the U.S. numbers.

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on January 1, 2008, totaled 6.06 million head, down 2 percent from 2007. After consecutive increases in 2005 and 2006, inventory has now declined for the past two years.

Breeding sheep inventory decreased to 4.51 million head on January 1, 2008, down 2 percent from 4.61 million head on January 1, 2007. Ewes one year old and older, at 3.62 million head, were 2 percent below last year.

Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2008, totaled 1.55 million head, down slightly from January 1, 2007. Market lambs comprised 95 percent of the total. Twenty-four percent were lambs under 65 pounds, 14 percent were 65 - 84 pounds, 26 percent were 85 - 105 pounds, and 36 percent were over 105 pounds. Market sheep comprised the remaining 5 percent of total market sheep and lambs. (continued on page two)

## January 1, 2008 Sheep and Goat Inventory (continued from page one)

The 2007 lamb crop of 4.05 million head, was down slightly from 2006. The 2007 lambing rate was 110 lambs per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2007, down 1 percent from 2006.

Shorn wool production in the United States during 2007 was 34.5 million pounds, down 4 percent from 2006. Sheep and lambs shorn totaled 4.71 million head, down 3 percent from 2006.

The average price paid for wool sold in 2007 was \$0.88 per pound for a total value of 30.3 million dollars, up 23 percent from 24.5 million dollars in 2006.

All goat inventory in the United States on January 1, 2008, totaled 3.02 million head, up 3 percent from 2007. Breeding goat inventory totaled 2.50 million head up 2 percent from 2007. All market goats and kids totaled 520,000 head, up 4 percent from a year ago. On January 1, 2008 meat and all other goats totaled 2.50 million head, up 4 percent from 2007.

Milk goat inventory increased 4 percent to 305,000 head while angora goats were down 12 percent totaling 210,000 head. The 2007 kid crop totaled 1.94 million head for all goats, up 1 percent from 2006.

Mohair production in the United States during 2007 was 1.14 million pounds. Goats and kids clipped totaled 185,000 head. Average weight per clip was 6.20 pounds. Mohair price was \$3.78 per pound with a value of 4.31 million dollars.

## Cattle and Calves Inventory January 1, 2006-2008

Class of Livestock	Montana				United States			
	2006	2007	2008	'08/'07	2006	2007	2008	'08/'07
	1,000 Head				1,000 Head			
All Cattle and Calves	2,400	2,400	2,600	108%	96,702	97,003	96,669	100%
Cows & Heifers that have calved	1,450	1,400	1,540	110%	42,056	42,023	41,777	99%
Beef Cows	1,431	1,382	1,523	110%	32,994	32,891	32,553	99%
Milk Cows	19	18	17	94%	9,063	9,132	9,224	101%
Heifers 500 pounds and over	610	630	630	100%	19,984	20,086	20,003	100%
For beef cow replacement	445	440	440	100%	5,904	5,877	5,670	96%
For milk cow replacement	8	10	12	120%	4,275	4,310	4,457	103%
Other heifers	157	180	178	99%	9,805	9,899	9,876	100%
Steers 500 pounds and over	180	240	240	100%	16,933	17,222	17,305	100%
Bulls 500 pounds and over	110	90	110	122%	2,263	2,215	2,207	100%
Calves less than 500 pounds	50	40	80	200%	15,465	15,456	15,378	99%
Cattle on Feed	55	55	40	73%	14,132	14,269	14,317	100%

## Calf Crop, 2005-2007

	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06
Calves born during year (1,000 Hd)	1,470	1,450	1,600	110%	37,575	37,519	37,361	100%

## Sheep, Lambs and Goats Inventory January 1, 2006-2008

Class of Livestock	Montana				United States			
	2006	2007	2008	'08/'07	2006	2007	2008	'08/'07
	1,000 head				1,000 head			
All Sheep and Lambs	295	290	290	100%	6,230	6,165	6,055	98%
Breeding sheep	270	265	265	100%	4,640	4,610	4,505	98%
One year old & older								
Ewes	208	209	209	100%	3,661	3,696	3,617	98%
Rams	7	7	7	100%	196	195	193	99%
Replacement Lambs	55	49	49	100%	783	719	695	97%
Market Sheep & Lambs	25	25	25	100%	1,590	1,555	1,550	100%
Sheep	6	6	3	50%	76	89	80	90%
Lambs	19	19	22	116%	1,514	1,466	1,470	100%
Milk goats	2.7	2.2	2.0	91%	290	294	305	104%
Meat and other goats	10.0	12.0	11.0	92%	2,287	2,402	2,500	104%

## Lamb Crop, 2005-2007

Item	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06
Lamb crop (1,000 head)	275	270	270	100%	4,117	4,065	4,050	100%

## Sheep and Lambs Shorn and Wool Production and Value

Item	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06	2005	2006	2007	'07/'06
Number Shorn (1,000 Hd)	260	255	255	100%	5,072	4,852	4,705	97%
Average Pounds per Fleece	9.6	9.2	9.2	100%	7.3	7.4	7.3	99%
Wool Produced (1,000 Lbs)	2,490	2,350	2,350	100%	37,232	36,019	34,533	96%
Wool: Dollars Per Pound	0.98	0.91	1.30	143%	0.71	0.68	0.88	129%
Total Value (1,000 Dollars)	2,440	2,139	3,055	143%	26,272	24,510	30,258	123%

## Ag Prices Received for December

December full month crop prices were mostly higher when compared with November 2007. Montana's winter wheat price was \$6.25 per bushel, down \$0.47 from the previous month, spring wheat rose \$0.21 to \$7.29 per bushel, and durum wheat increased \$1.47 to \$10.60 per bushel, setting a new record high. Feed barley was down \$0.20 from November to \$4.73, but malt barley prices increased \$1.93 to \$5.15 per bushel, setting a new record high.

The mid-January price for alfalfa hay was \$1.00 above December at \$77.00 per ton, but all other hay dropped \$1.00 to \$70.00 per ton. Mid-January grain prices were mostly higher when compared with December 2007. Winter wheat was \$7.00 per bushel, spring wheat was \$8.40 per bushel, durum wheat was \$11.90 per bushel, feed barley was \$5.21 per bushel, and malt barley was \$4.13 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of December were mixed when compared with November 2007. Steer and heifers decreased \$4.00 to \$108.00 per cwt, but cows were up \$0.70 to \$42.70 per cwt.

The price for beef cattle was \$88.40, down \$2.60 per cwt and the price for calves dropped \$2.00 to \$121.00 per cwt. Sheep were up \$3.70 to \$22.80 per cwt and lambs were up \$2.00 to \$104.00 per cwt. The all milk price decreased \$0.30 per cwt from last month to \$21.90 per cwt. Mid-January prices for steers and heifers were \$100.00 per cwt, cows were \$45.20 per cwt, beef cattle were \$87.40 per cwt, calves were \$115.00 per cwt, and milk was \$21.20 per cwt.

U.S. prices for December and changes from November were as follows: winter wheat was \$7.66 per bushel, up \$0.34, spring wheat was \$7.46 per bushel, up \$0.44, durum wheat was \$11.60 per bushel, up \$0.50, all barley was \$4.51 per bushel, up \$0.17, oats were \$2.69 per bushel, down \$0.04, steers and heifers were \$95.10 per cwt, down \$0.80, cows were \$44.90 per cwt, up \$1.00, calves were \$118.00 per cwt, down \$1.00, sheep were \$29.70 per cwt, up \$2.10, lambs were \$98.50 per cwt, up \$1.20, and all milk was \$21.50 per cwt, down \$0.40 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-January winter wheat price was \$8.33 per bushel, spring wheat was

\$8.38 per bushel, durum wheat was \$13.40 per bushel, malt barley was \$4.75 per bushel, feed barley was \$5.23 per bushel, steers and heifers were \$95.20 per cwt, cows were \$46.20 per cwt, calves were \$116.00 per cwt, all milk was \$20.70 per cwt, all hogs were \$36.50 per cwt, and all eggs were \$1.29 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in January, at 150 percent, based on 1990-92=100, increased 6 points (4.2 percent) from December. The Crop Index is up 16 points (11 percent) but the Livestock Index decreased 4 points (2.9 percent). The All Farm Index and All Crop Index are at record highs. Producers received higher commodity prices for corn, soybeans, broilers, and wheat and lower prices were received for milk, tomatoes, hogs, and turkeys. The overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased average marketings of corn, soybeans, cattle, and strawberries offset decreased marketings of grapes, milk, broilers, and cottonseed.

## Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	UNIT	Monthly Average				Change from Previous		Mid-Month Avg	
		Montana			U.S.	Month		Montana	U.S.
		Dec 2006	Nov 2007	Dec 2007	Dec 2007	Nov 2007	Dec 2006	15-Jan-08	15-Jan-08
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu	4.48	6.72	6.25	7.66	-0.47	1.77	7.00	8.33
Durum Wheat	Bu	4.87	9.13	10.60	11.60	1.47	5.73	11.90	13.40
Spring Wheat	Bu	4.56	7.08	7.29	7.46	0.21	2.73	8.40	8.38
All Wheat	Bu	4.54	7.05	6.94	7.74	-0.11	2.40	7.88	8.55
All Barley	Bu	3.04	3.73	5.01	4.51	1.28	1.97	4.50	4.92
Feed Barley	Bu	2.83	4.93	4.73	4.78	-0.20	1.90	5.21	5.23
Malt Barley	Bu	3.10	3.22	5.15	4.36	1.93	2.05	4.13	4.75
Oats	Bu	1.93	na	na	2.69	na	na	na	2.71
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	76.00	69.00	76.00	136.00	7.00	0.00	77.00	135.00
All Other Hay	Ton	74.00	69.00	71.00	126.00	2.00	-3.00	70.00	118.00
All Hay Baled	Ton	76.00	69.00	75.00	133.00	6.00	-1.00	76.00	129.00
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	102.00	112.00	108.00	95.10	-4.00	6.00	100.00	95.20
Cows	Cwt	39.80	42.00	42.70	44.90	0.70	2.90	45.20	46.20
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	88.30	91.00	88.40	88.90	-2.60	0.10	87.40	89.40
Calves	Cwt	118.00	123.00	121.00	118.00	-2.00	3.00	115.00	116.00
Sheep	Cwt	31.00	19.10	22.80	29.70	3.70	-8.20	na	na
Lambs	Cwt	106.00	102.00	104.00	98.50	2.00	-2.00	na	na
All Milk	Cwt	13.90	22.20	21.90	21.50	-0.30	8.00	21.20	20.70

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. na-not available.

## Farm Numbers and Land in Farms

There were 28,300 farms in Montana during 2007, up 200 from the previous year. Farms are sub-grouped by economic sales. The smallest economic sales category, \$1,000 to \$9,999, contains the largest number of farms at

11,800, up 500 farms from 2006. The next economic sales category, \$10,000 to \$99,999, had 10,500 farms in 2007 compared with 10,800 in 2006. For the economic sales category of \$100,000 to \$249,999, there were 3,600 farms, compared with 3,800 the previous year. The economic sales category of

\$250,000 to \$499,999 shows 1,600 farms in 2007 compared with 1,500 last year. The number of farms in the highest economic sales class of \$500,000 or more had 800 farms, up 100 from 2006. (continued on back page)

## Farm Numbers and Land in Farms (continued from page three)

Land in farms is estimated at 60.0 million acres, down 100,000 acres from 2006. Montana's average farm size is 2,120 acres. Land in farms was also broken down by economic sales class. The breakdowns by sales category and percent change from the previous year are as follows: \$1,000 to \$9,999, 4.2 million acres, up 8 percent from last year; \$10,000 to \$99,999, 17.3 million acres, down 1 percent from 2006; \$100,000 to \$249,999, 17.4 million acres, down 3 percent from a year ago; \$250,000 to \$499,999, 11.8 million, unchanged; and \$500,000 or more, 9.3 million, up 4 percent from last year.

The number of farms in the United States in 2007 is estimated at 2.08 million, 0.6 percent fewer than in 2006. Total land in farms, at 930.9 million acres, decreased 1.5 million acres, or 0.16 percent, from 2006. The average farm size was 449 acres during 2007, an increase of three acres from the previous year. The decline in the number of farms and land in farms reflects a continuing consolidation in farming operations and diversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses.

Farm numbers declined in the \$1,000 - \$9,999 and the \$10,000 - \$99,999 sales classes. Farm numbers rose slightly in the three largest sales classes. The changes within the sales classes were a result of operations moving to larger sales classes by consolidation or expansion and rising incomes as result of strong commodity prices. Because of rising incomes, many farms and ranches near the top of their sales class in 2006 moved into the next higher sales class in 2007 without adding land or otherwise expanding their operations.

The largest percentage changes from 2006 occurred in the smallest and largest sales classes. Farm numbers declined 1.5 percent, to 1.14 million farms, in the \$1,000 - \$9,999 sales class. Meanwhile, farm numbers increased 4.4 percent, to 84,970 farms, in the \$500,000 and over sales class. The number of farms with less than \$100,000 in sales fell 1.2 percent from 2006 while the number of farms with \$100,000 or more in sales rose 2.2 percent.

Land in farms also shifted from lower sales classes to higher sales classes. In the \$1,000 - \$9,999 sales class, land in farms dropped 1.6 percent, to 112.8 million acres, while land operated by farms in the largest sales class, \$500,000 or more in sales, increased 1.8 percent, to 217.3 million acres.

Overall, the average farm size increased three acres in 2007. However, average farm sizes declined in some of the sales classes due to smaller farms moving up to higher sales classes.

### 2007 Number of Livestock Operations

The number of cattle operations in Montana during 2007 was 12,400, up 200 from last year. The number of beef cow operations was unchanged from 2006 at 11,000. Milk cow operations decreased from 600 to 550 in 2007. Operations that have one or more head of cattle, beef, or milk cows are included in the number of operations.

Only cattle and beef cow operations are published by size group for Montana. By size group, the largest cattle operation category is 1-49 head with 5,500 operations, accounting for 3.5 percent of the total inventory. The second largest category is 100-499 head, with 3,800 operations or 37.0 percent of the total inventory. There are 1,850 operations with 50-99 head, accounting for 5.5 percent of the total inventory. The two remaining size groups, 500-999 head with 900 operations, and 1,000+ head with 350 operations, represent 25.0 and 29.0 percent of the inventory, respectively.

By size group, the largest number of beef cow operations is the 1-49 head category with 5,100 operations, accounting for 5.8 percent of the beef cow inventory. The second largest category is 100-499 head with 3,700 operations, and accounts for 56.0 percent of the beef cow inventory. There are 1,720 operations having 50-99 head with 8.2 percent of the total inventory. The remaining size group is 500+ head with 480 operations, representing 30.0 percent of the total inventory.

There were 500 operations with hogs in Montana during 2007, unchanged from 2006. The number of sheep operations rose by 100 from last year to 1,700 operations.

In the United States, the number of operations with cattle totaled 971,400 during 2006, down 1 percent from 2005 and 2 percent below 2004. Beef cow operations in 2006 were down 1 percent from 2005 and 2 percent below 2004. Milk cow operations were 4 percent below last year and 8 percent below two years ago.

The number of operations with hogs totaled 65,540 during 2006, down 3 percent from 2005 and 6 percent from

2004. Places with 2,000 or more head accounted for 80 percent of the inventory.

The number of operations with sheep totaled 69,090 during 2006, up 1 percent from 2005 and up 2 percent from 2004. Of all sheep operations that include breeding sheep, 90.8 percent were comprised of 1-99 head, 7.6 percent had 100-499 head, and the remaining 1.6 percent were operations with 500 head or more. Operations with 1-99 head account for 28.7 percent of the inventory, 100-499 head account for 24.0 percent of the inventory, and 500+ head account for 47.3 percent of the inventory.

### U.S. December Egg Production

U.S. egg production totaled 7.76 billion during December 2007, down slightly from last year. Production included 6.63 billion table eggs, and 1.13 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.06 billion were broiler-type and 67 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during December 2007 averaged 344 million, down 1 percent from last year. December egg production per 100 layers was 2,256 eggs, up 1 percent from December 2006.

All layers in the U.S. on January 1, 2008 totaled 345 million, down 1 percent from last year. The 345 million layers consisted of 285 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 57.2 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.75 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on January 1, 2008, averaged 72.4 eggs per 100 layers, up 2 percent from January 1, 2007.

Egg-type chicks hatched during December 2007 totaled 35.5 million, up 7 percent from December 2006. Eggs in incubators totaled 35.8 million on January 1, 2008, up 4 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 245 thousand during December 2007, up 4 percent from December 2006.

Broiler-type chicks hatched during December 2007 totaled 823 million, up 3 percent from December 2006. Eggs in incubators totaled 677 million on January 1, 2008, up 4 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 6.75 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during December 2007, down 6 percent from December 2006.

### COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER

Alfalfa Seed Production	Potato Stocks
Wheat County Estimates	US & Canadian Cattle
Barley County Estimates	Cattle on feed
Crop values	Red Meat Production

Peggy Stringer, Director  
John Hilton, Deputy Director  
Wendy Bruski, Statistical Info Assistant  
10 W 15th Street, Helena, MT 59626  
406-441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612  
[www.nass.usda.gov/mt/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/mt/) nass-mt@nass.usda.gov